



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Dear Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Thank you for your electronic correspondence of January 16, 2014 to President Barack Obama which was received by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), concerning the chemical spill in Charleston, West Virginia. EPA shares your concern about the Chemical Spill and the quality of the drinking water.

EPA has been monitoring the incident and has been in close communication with West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR). I wish to assure you that the West Virginia (WV) agencies have done everything possible to quickly respond to this emergency. We consider the WV agencies our partners in protecting the environment. They have taken the steps to correct this situation and restore the drinking water for the people of the Charleston area.

The Federal government, including EPA, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Federal Emergency management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal bureau of Investigation (FBI), has mobilized our resources to support the WV agencies through every step of this emergency. An EPA emergency responder has been at Freedom Industries throughout the incident. EPA personnel from the Office of Drinking Water and Source Water Protection have been in contact with the WVDHHR and the West Virginia Water Company to provide assistance or advice. From the beginning the Federal and State response to the Chemical Spill has been conducted with mutual cooperation and communication.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Francis Burns, Branch Chief of EPA's Western Response Branch at 215-814-3245.

Sincerely,

Kathryn A. Hodgkiss, Acting Director
Hazardous Site Cleanup Division

cc: Overview of EPA's Drinking Water Program



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An Overview of EPA's Drinking Water Program

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the main federal law that ensures the quality of our nation's drinking water. The SDWA authorizes the EPA to set national health-based standards to protect against naturally-occurring and man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. EPA, states, and water systems work together to make sure that these standards are met. Most states directly oversee the water systems within their borders.

The SDWA also directs public water systems to develop source water assessments. The source water assessment is a study that defines the land area contributing water to each public water system, identifies the major potential sources of contamination that could affect the drinking water supply, and determines how susceptible the public water supply is to this potential contamination. Utilities and citizens can then use the publicly available study results to take actions to reduce potential sources of contamination and protect drinking water. Information about the assessment is included in the yearly consumer confidence report that customers receive from their water utility. Information is also available from your state source water protection program.

EPA has set standards for approximately 90 contaminants and indicators in drinking water. These contaminants, regulated under the National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR), are legally enforceable standards that apply to public water systems. The chemicals cited in the recent spill event, 4-Methylcyclohexanemethanol (MCHM), propylene glycol phenyl ether (PPH) and dipropylene glycol phenyl ether (DiPPH), are not currently regulated by EPA under the NPDWR. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), few studies exist on the specialized chemical MCHM, and toxicologic information on PPH and DiPPH is limited.

However, EPA recognizes the need to continually evaluate new potential contaminants and collects data on unregulated contaminants through the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring (UCM) program. The UCM regulation directs public water systems to collect data for contaminants suspected to be present in drinking water, but that do not have health-based standards set under the SDWA. Data collected through the program are used to support analysis and review of contaminant occurrence, to guide the candidate contaminant selection process, and to support the EPA Administrator's determination of whether to regulate a contaminant in the interest of protecting public health. Additional information about the current round of UCM monitoring is available on our website: www.water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/ucmr/ucmr3/basicinformation.cfm



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AX-14-000-4295-4295WH - Contaminated Water in West Virginia

CONCURRENCES								
SYMBOL	*3HS32	3HS30	3HS52	3HS00	3HS00			
SURNAME	*BURNS	WRIGHT	TAYLOR	ROSE	HODGKISS			
DATE	*							



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